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Criminal Law & Procedure, Habeas Corpus

Winfield v. O'Brien, No. 13-2438

The district court's denial of petitioner's petition for a writ of habeas corpus seeking to invalidate his conviction for assaulting and raping a two-year-old child is affirmed, where, given petitioner's opportunity to commit the offense was materially greater than that of the only other possible perpetrator, and given that the expert evidence and the phone call cast heightened relevant focus on the time when petitioner was alone with the child, Massachusetts courts could have reasonably concluded that a rational jury could have found petitioner guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

Contracts, ERISA

Guerra-Delgado v. Banco Popular de Puerto Rico, No. 13-2065

In this Employment Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) case, defendant-employer undertook a final calculation of plaintiff's pension which yielded monthly payments substantially lower than earlier estimates had suggested. Plaintiff thereafter claims seeking the higher amount under ERISA section 502(a)(1), 29 U.S.C. section 1132(a)(1), a theory of estoppel, and Puerto Rico contract law. Dismissal of plaintiff's ERISA and contract claims is affirmed, where: 1) plaintiff could not be awarded relief under the terms of defendant's retirement plan and ERISA preempted the commonwealth law claims; and 2) estoppel could not apply given that the terms of the benefits plan were unambiguous.

Insurance Law, Remedies

Ruksznis v. Argonaut Insurance Company, No. 13-2474

In this reach and apply action brought by plaintiff to collect the judgment he successfully obtained in a slander suit (defendant is the insurance company for the Town that plaintiff obtained the judgment against), summary judgment in favor of defendant is affirmed, where: 1) the insurance contract contained various exclusions for "employment-related" practices, barring plaintiff's recovery; and 2) the term "employment" unambiguously covers plaintiff's relationship with the Town, as he is a former plumbing inspector for the Town.